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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/727,033	12/02/2003	Peter C. Kong	B-289	4420

7590 06/17/2005
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EXAMINER

PASCHALL, MARK H

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3742

DATE MAILED: 06/17/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/727,033

Applicant(s)

KONG ET AL.

Examiner

Mark H. Paschall

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-85 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-85 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 12-02-03.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: ____.

DETAILED ACTION

The title of the invention is not descriptive. A new title is required that is clearly indicative of the invention to which the claims are directed.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

Claims 1-4, 18-25, 34-39, 50-60, 73-75 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chism, Jr. et al in view of Williamson.

Chism, Jr. et al teach the claimed invention but do not set forth multiple sets of electrodes in multiple zones, as instantly claimed. Note the Chism, Jr. et al do teach three phase energization of the plasma as claimed, and also teach current sensing and other parameter control as claimed. The patent to Williamson is applied for clearly

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teaching that it is conventional in a plasma furnace to have multiple sets of staggered electrodes in a three-phase connection, as claimed. Use of the same leads to efficient heating in a longitudinal direction. In view of this teaching it would have been obvious to modify the patent to Chism, Jr. et al to use multiple sets of electrodes connected to the three phase power supplies, as claimed, to enable a more uniform, efficient and longitudinally maintained heating zone. Note that the particular electrode shapes such as tubular and use of particular materials for the electrode such as graphite, as set forth in the dependent claims, is an obvious choice for the artisan, dependent on the end use of the device. Note that Figure 2 in Williamson defines multiple zones of heating and barring further description of the same in the claims; these are construed as multiple chamber modules of components.

Claims 5-17,25-33,40-49,61-72,76-85 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chism, Jr. et al in view of Williamson as applied to claims above, and further in view of Jung. Chism, Jr. as modified above, teach the claimed invention but do not mention use of movable electrodes for electrode adjustment. However, such use is conventional, as set forth in the Jung patent. Lines 23-38 in Jung in column 10 teach that the electrodes can be moved and positioned in a plasma furnace for arc control. In view of this teaching it would have been obvious to modify the Chism, Jr. et al system with the same to enable the benefit of better arc control and hence arc efficiency, and to enable replacement of electrode consumables as needed. Use of a rod, or other means to effect such movement as defined in the dependent

claims is a matter of choice for the artisan, since many schemes are available for such movement, such schemes ebullient in effect.

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Alvi et al, Cerutti et al, Czernichowski et al and Titus et al are cited for teaching plasma furnace and heating systems of interest.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Mark H. Paschall whose telephone number is 703 308-1642. The examiner can normally be reached on 7 am - 3pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Robin Evans can be reached on (703) 305-5766. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Mark H Paschall

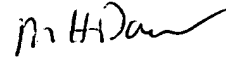
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Primary Examiner
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Mp

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. H. Dan", with a stylized flourish at the end.